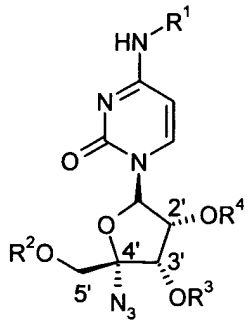
We claim:

1. A method of treating a viral infection mediated by a virus of family *Flaviviridae* by administering to an animal in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to formula **I**



(I)

wherein:

R^1 and R^2 are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, COR^5, CO_2R^5 and $COCH(R^6)NHR^7$;

R^3 and R^4 independently of the other are selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, COR^5, CO_2R^5 and $COCH(R^6)NHR^7$, or R^3 and R^4 taken together are selected from the group consisting of CH_2, $C(CH_3)_2$ and CHPh;

R^5 is independently selected from the group consisting of C_{1-6} unbranched or branched alkyl, C_{1-6} unbranched or branched alkenyl, C_{1-6} unbranched or branched alkynyl, C_{1-6} lower haloalkyl, C_{3-8} cycloalkyl, alkyl substituted C_{3-8} cycloalkyl, phenyl optionally independently substituted with one to three substituents selected from the group consisting of halo, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, lower thioalkyl, lower alkyl sulfinyl, lower alkyl sulfonyl, nitro, and cyano, CH_2Ph wherein in phenyl ring is optionally substituted as described above and CH_2OPh wherein in phenyl ring is optionally substituted as described above;

R^6 is selected from the group consisting of the side chains of naturally occurring amino acids and C_{1-5} unbranched or branched alkyl;

R^7 is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, R^5OCO, and;

hydrates, solvates, clathrates and acid addition salts thereof; and,

pharmaceutical compositions comprising such compounds or for the preparation of medicaments for such treatment;

with the proviso that the viral infection is not mediated by Hepatitis C Virus.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein said viral infections are mediated by dengue fever virus, West Nile virus, St. Louis encephalitis virus, Japanese encephalitis virus or Murray Valley encephalitis virus.

3. A method according to claim 1 wherein R^1, R^2, R^3 and R^4 are hydrogen.

4. A method according to claim 1 wherein said viral infections are mediated by dengue fever virus, West Nile virus, St. Louis encephalitis virus, Japanese encephalitis virus or Murray Valley encephalitis virus.

5. The method of Claim 4 wherein the compound is delivered in a dose of between 1 and 100 mg/kg of body weight of the patient per day.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the animal is a human.

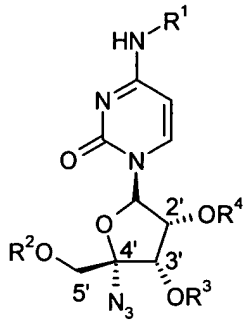
7. The method of Claim 1 further comprising co-administering an immune system modulator.

8. The method of Claim 7 wherein the immune system modulator is an interferon, interleukin, tumor necrosis factor or colony stimulating factor, an antiviral agent or an anti-inflammatory agent.

9. The method of Claim 8 wherein the immune system modulator is an interferon or chemically derivatized interferon.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the immune system modulator is interferon-α or chemically derivatized interferon-α.

11. A pharmaceutical composition for treating a viral infection mediated by a virus of family *Flaviviridae* comprising a therapeutically effective quantity of a compound of formula **I**



(I)

wherein:

R^1 and R^2 are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, COR^5, CO_2R^5 and $COCH(R^6)NHR^7$;

R^3 and R^4 independently of the other are selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, COR^5, CO_2R^5 and $COCH(R^6)NHR^7$, or R^3 and R^4 taken together are selected from the group consisting of CH_2, $C(CH_3)_2$ and CHPh;

R^5 is independently selected from the group consisting of C_{1-6} unbranched or branched alkyl, C_{1-6} unbranched or branched alkenyl, C_{1-6} unbranched or branched alkynyl, C_{1-6} lower haloalkyl, C_{3-8} cycloalkyl, alkyl substituted C_{3-8} cycloalkyl, phenyl optionally independently substituted with one to three substituents selected from the group consisting of halo, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, lower thioalkyl, lower alkyl sulfinyl, lower alkyl sulfonyl, nitro, and cyano, CH_2Ph wherein in phenyl ring is optionally substituted as described above and CH_2OPh wherein in phenyl ring is optionally substituted as described above;

R^6 is selected from the group consisting of the side chains of naturally occurring amino acids and C_{1-5} unbranched or branched alkyl;

R^7 is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, R^5OCO, and;

hydrates, solvates, clathrates and acid addition salts thereof; in combination with one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers and excipients; pharmaceutical compositions comprising such compounds; or, for the preparation of medicaments for such treatment;

with the proviso that the viral infection is not mediated by Hepatitis C Virus.

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